Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1796 - January 13 2012

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The following is a Q-S-T. The Supreme Court hears an appeal dealing with broadcast indecency that could eventually impact ham radio and other services. Also, the FCC turns away an ARRL vanity call sign appeal dealing with club calls; Missouri exempts hams from a proposed cellphone while driving law and ham radio to celebrate the life of famed country music legend Johnny Cash. All this and more on Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) report number 1796 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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RADIO LAW: FCC HEARS CHALLENGE TO FCC INDECENT LANGUAGE RULES

The United States Supreme Court heard arguments on Tuesday, January 10th about whether the FCC should still have a role in policing the nation's airwaves or whether its indecency regulations violate guarantees of free speech and due process. Whatever the justices decide could also impact on other, non-broadcast services as well. Amateur Radio Newsline's Cheryl Lasek, K9BIK, has more:

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The broadcast networks have argued successfully in lower courts that in a world where they exist side by side with cable channels, the Internet and satellite provided programming that it is beyond the FCC's jurisdiction and that singling them out is not only nonsensical but totally unconstitutional. And in a court brief, Washington attorney Carter G. Phillips, who represents several networks, told the court that broadcasting is neither uniquely pervasive nor uniquely accessible to children, yet broadcasters are still denied the same basic First Amendment freedoms as other media.

Phillips continued by stating that to the average American viewer, broadcasting is just one source among hundreds in a media-saturated environment. He noted that with a mere press of a button on the remote control one could switch from other to fully protected sources.

On the other side of this issue is the Obama administration which is defending the FCC's regulatory powers. It told the court that in what it calls a new media world that the FCC is still required to have continued federal oversight of the public airwaves. This, to provide a haven for parents and children from the unregulated world of cable television and the Internet.

In his brief, U.S. Solicitor General Donald B. Verrilli Jr. wrote that generations of parents have relied on indecency regulation to safeguard broadcast television as a relatively safe medium for their children. He notes that the current regulations come from a 1978 Supreme Court's

decision in the case of the FCC versus the Pacifica Foundation. There the court upheld the commission's decision that an afternoon radio broadcast of comedian George Carlin's 1973 monologue broadcast over New York City station WBAI about the so-called seven words that could not be said on television violated indecency standards. It was in that case where the Supreme Court found that the FCC was well within constitutional boundaries to police the radio and television airwaves during the times children would probably be listening, which was interpreted between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m.

As to the reason that this is an important case for ham radio and other personal radio services? Simply because traditionally enforcement of indecency violations in amateur radio, CB and the like has long been predicated on and tied to the standards used to guide commercial broadcasters. If the Supreme Court rules that the FCC cannot control indecent language in broadcasting it could be in effect saying that the government has no power on this issue in other services, including what's said on the ham radio bands.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline. I'm Cheryl Lasek, K9BIK, in Zion, Illinois.

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In recent years, the Supreme Court has regularly ruled in favor of free-speech claims. But during oral arguments none of the justices voiced any support for making a major change in the law barring broadcast indecency during safe haven hours. As we go to air it's not known when the Justices will render its decision in this case. (Various published reports)

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RADIO LAW: FCC REJECTS ARRL PARTIAL APPEAL ON CLUB CALLSIGNS

The FCC has rejected a motion for partial reconsideration of revised rules enacted by the FCC. These to limit the number of vanity calls that any individual or club can hold.

In its petition the League stated that it supports the Commission's efforts to prevent club stations from obtaining an unfair share of desirable call signs. But it also expressed concern that the precise rule language adopted by the FCC did not preclude the abuses that the Report and Order intended to prohibit. Specifically, the ARRL believes that if a club has multiple station trustees, each of these trustees could obtain a vanity call sign for the club. That in turn could allow the club to obtain multiple vanity call signs.

But in denying the ARRL appeal the FCC said that the Leagues petition does not provide any grounds for reconsidering the Commission's decision in the Report and Order. It said that the concerns expressed by ARRL about licensees attempting to evade the rules adopted in the Report and Order are already addressed by the Commission's licensing rules and processes. It notes that Section 97.5(b)(2) of its rules states, in part, that a club station license grant may be held only by the person who is the license or trustee designated by an officer of

the club. In simpler terms, only one vanity call sign per club. (FCC)

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RADIO LAW: FCC GREEN LIGHTS STA FOR TEXAS HAM TO RUN HF SPREAD SPECTRUM

The FCC has granted Philip J. Williams, KA1GMN, of Euless, Texas, a Special Temporary Authority or STA to conduct Spread Spectrum experiments on 160 through 2 meters.

The 6 month authorization takes effect February 1st and expires on July 31st. It limits Williams to a maximum 2.5 kHz of signal bandwidths at 100 watts effective radiated power. Williams was directed by the FCC to use the Experimental Station call letters WF9XJD during his investigational Spread Spectrum transmissions.

Previous experiments with Spread Spectrum technology have been conducted on the ham radio bands at 222 MHz and above where this mode of transmission is already legal. The Special Temporary Authority granted to Williams is the first permitting Spread Spectrum experimentation on the High Frequency and lower VHF bands. (FCC)

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LOW FREQUENCY EXPERIMENT: OPERA ENCODED SIGNAL TRAVELS 2200 MILES

Opera has made a big debuet on the ham radio bands. Using the new Opera data mode, Gary Taylor, G4WGT, in Lancanshire in the United Kingdom has successfully transmitted a signal on 137.5 kHz across the North Atlantic to Joe Craig, VO1NA, in Toebay, Canada. This over a distance of 3,500 kilometers or 2200 miles.

Taylor transmitted six full callsign frames in a two hour period, which is a big time saving over other slow digital modes like QRSS. Opera was created by Graham Brown, G0NBD with the actual code written by Jose Ros, EA5HVK. This as a way of providing data operations for stations that only had the CW capability. The most up to date information on this mode can be found at groups.yahoo.com. (Southgate)

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RADIO SCIENCE: UK HAMS EXPERIENCE DELAYED ECHO PHENOMENA ON 80 METERS

Two UK amateurs have reported hearing strong echoes on their 80 meter CW signals in the evening. Tony Roskilly, G3ZRJ in Herefordshire and Andrew Fairgrieve, GW3OQK in Swansea were in QSO on January 1st when they could hear another signal underneath theirs. It turned out to be an echo of their own signals.

Roskilly said the echoes were initially so strong that he had trouble monitoring his CW keying. The delay in the echoes was of the order of a quarter to a half second and the echo strength hit S9. Tests by Fairgrieve on the evening of the 3rd of January revealed the same phenomena at around 21.00 UTC, albeit weaker in signal strength.

Steve Nichols, G0KYA, is the chairman of the RSGB's Propagation Studies Committee. He says that these were unlikely to be round-the-world echoes, but could be due to a form of magnetospheric ducting where signals follow the earth's magnetic field lines down to the southern hemisphere before being bounced back along the same duct. Nichols said that this was quite rare and not really understood.

Amateurs are being urged to look out for any echoes on their 80 meter signals and report any findings to G0KYA (at) qsl (dot) net. (GB2RS)

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RESTRUCTURING: DUTCH HAMS GRANTED BANDS AT 500 KHZ AND 70 MHZ

Dutch amateurs have been granted access to two new bands. The first is a low-band grant from 501 to 505 kHz on a secondary basis with power and mode restrictions. And like most of the European continent they also now are permitted operations from 70 to 70.5MHz. This also on a secondary basis with restrictions on the power output level that they can run. (GB2RS)

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BREAK 1

>From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the N8LFR repeater serving Bad Aex, Michigan.

(5 sec pause here)

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RADIO LAW: MISSOURI EXEMPTS HAMS FROM PROPOSED CELLPHONE AND TEXTING LAW

Some good news for hams in the show me state. They won't be subject to a new law working its way through the Missouri legislature to control cellphone and texting while driving a motor vehicle. Matthew Chambers, NR0Q, is here with the details:

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If you live in Missouri you might have heard, there is a new Senate Bill, SB 567, that has been introduced by State Senator Robin Write-Jones, a Democrat-St Louis to be considered in 2012 by the Missouri Senate. There is good news though in this bill if you're a ham radio operator. The last line of the bill contains the following exemption language:

Exempt are the use of two-way radio transmitters or receivers by a licensee of the Federal Communications Commission in the Amateur Radio Service.

That means that the mobile use of amateur transceivers is for now safe in Missouri.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, This is Matthew Chambers, NR0Q. In Moberly Missouri

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>From its wording, the exemption is only for ham radio so users of F-R-S, GMRS and CB might be subject to penalties unless the regulation gets changed to exempt theses personal radio services as well. (NR0Q)

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RADIO LAW: LESS THAN ONE YEAR REMAINS FOR LAND MOBILE RADIO LICENSEES TO NARROWBAND

Land mobile radio service licensees operating in the 150 to 174 Mhz and in the 421 to 512 MHz bands now have less than a year to transition to FCC mandated narrowband operations. This as the regulatory agency issues a Public Notice reminding all licensees, frequency coordinators, equipment manufacturers, and other interested parties of the Commission's January 1, 2013 deadline to migrate to 12.5 kHz or narrower channel spacing technology.

By January 1, 2013, all VHF/UHF Industrial, Business and Public Safety Radio Pool licensees must operate on 12.5 kHz or narrower channels, or employ a technology that achieves the narrowband equivalent of at least one channel per 12.5 kHz of channel bandwidth. As of that same date equipment manufacturers will no longer be permitted to manufacture and import previously certified equipment that includes a 25 kHz channel spacing mode.

The FCC's Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau, and Office of Engineering and Technology have issued prior guidance by Public Notice regarding narrowbanding migration, compliance, and waiver requests. In addition, detailed information and references to other resources concerning narrowbanding are available at www.fcc.gov/narrowbanding.

We should add that the amateur 2 meter and 70 centimeter bands are not affected by this FCC mandated narrowbanding order. It only affects commercial land mobile operations.

In the world of amateur radio FM and repeaters, most regions already use 15 kHz channel separation on 2 meters. On 70 centimeters, some regions are reportedly considering a shift from 25 to 12.5 kHz in crowded urban areas. And to be different than the rest of the nation, Southern California shifted from 25 to 20 kHz inter system spacing in the 70 centimeter repeater subband several years ago. (FCC, ARNewsline(tm) archive)

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RADIO LAW: VERIZON PROCEEDS WITH SPECTRUM ACQUISITIONS

A big move by telecommunications provider Verizon to ease its own spectrum crunch. Jim Davis, W2JKD, reports:

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Verizon is set to invest in well over 100 licenses to operate broadband systems between 1700 MHz and 2100 MHz. This after spending $3.6 billion dollars to obtain spectrum from cable companies Comcast, Time Warner Cable and Bright House. Jim Davis, W2JKD, has the details:

Verizon says that the acquisition is a positive development which would take spectrum that had been gathering dust in the cable company's inventories and put it in the hands of a company with the motivation and wherewithal to put it to good use.

Lowell McAdam is Verizon's Chief Executive Officer. He recently told the Communications Daily industry newsletter that his company feels good about the acquisition from another perspective. This is because as Verizon has discussed its acquisition of spectrum with the FCC, it has found that one of the problems was there is a lot of spectrum that has been warehoused. This says McAdam takes spectrum with no plans for commercial service and gets it into the hands of somebody who will use it and allow additional investment and development.

Im Jim Davis, W2JKD.

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Congress and the FCC are trying to push through a spectrum package involving the auction of spectrum in the television band but that has become bogged down in partisan politics. However it appears as if Verizon has taken the initiative to let the free enterprise market set the value and proceed on its own. (Future Communications)

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DIY RADIO NEWS: CQ TO INTRODUCE MAKER COLUMN

CQ magazine will introduce a quarterly "Maker" column, to be written by Matt Stultz, KB3TAN, that will appear in the March, June, September and December issues of the magazine.

KB3TAN is the founder of "HackPittsburgh. This is a community workshop for makers in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He has been a ham since 2009 and has integrated amateur radio into many of HackPittsburgh's activities.

As already reported, the hacker and maker movement is a worldwide do-it-yourself phenomenon among mostly younger, tech-savvy individuals who enjoy hands-on tinkering and experimenting with electronics, crafts and similar projects. Many "makers" are not familiar with amateur radio, even though hams have been "makers" since the dawn of radio. CQ says that the goal of this column to help build and strengthen bridges between the amateur radio and the maker communities. (CQ)

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DIY RADIO NEWS: MULTIPLE LANGUAGE VERSIONS OF THE DIY MAGIC OF AMATEUR RADIO

And speaking of the maker and hacker communities, while it's not even been out a month, there appear to be several groups that have either asked permission to translate the ARRL's new the DIY Magic of Amateur Radio video into other languages or are already undertaking such a project.

Since its release last December 27th, word is that versions with either sub titles or over-dubbed audio are being prepared by individuals or groups around the globe in the Spanish, Portugese and possibly even Russian languages. And these are the ones that are known about.

Also, Tom Medlin who hosted the December 27th release of the video on his W5KUB website has made available some statistics. These show that the new video had viewers in Canada, Venezuela, Mexico, Argentina, France, Cayman Islands, Puerto Rico and New Zealand as well as across the United States.

Those who have not yet seen the new video can do so on-line on YouTube in English at tinyurl.com/arrl-diy-movie. You can also watch it or download it at www.arrl.org/DIY. (ARNewsline(tm))

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HAM PUBLICATIONS: WINTER 5 MHZ NEWSLETTER NOW ON LINE

The Winter edition of the 5MHz Newsletter has just been published and includes a chart of the current 5MHz allocations worldwide. Although originating in the United Kingdom the publication invites worldwide readers and contributors to take an active part in its creation. The latest edition of the 5MHz Newsletter can be downloaded free of charge at tinyurl.com/72mozfx. (GB2RS)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: FORMER UK OFF SHORE DJ KNIGHTED

Some names in the news. First up is Roger James Gale, a Disk Jockey on Radio Caroline North and Caroline South in the 1960's, who has been knighted in the United Kingdom's New Year's Honors List. Gale had a long career in radio before becoming the member of Parliament for the North of Kent. He is also the president of the group Conservative Animal Welfare. More about Roger Gale is on-line at www.rogergale.com. (Southgate)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: G3KMA AND G3ZAY NAMED WINNERS OF YASME AWARD

And congratulations to Roger Ballister, G3KMA and Martin Atherton, G3ZAY on being named as recipients of the Yasme Excellence Award for

2011. This, in recognition for their dedicated work for the Islands on the Air program. The Yasme Foundation is a not-for-profit corporation organized to conduct scientific and educational projects related to amateur radio, including DXing and the introduction and promotion of amateur radio in underdeveloped countries. (RSGB)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: VLA TO BE RENAMED KARL G JANSKY VLA

The world's most famous radio telescope will become the Karl G. Jansky Very Large Array on March 31st. This, to honor the founder of radio astronomy which is the study of the universe using radio signals naturally emitted by objects in space.

The National Radio Astronomy Observatory announced the new name for the National Science Foundation's Very Large Array at the American Astronomical Society's meeting in Austin, Texas. The new name will become official at a rededication ceremony at the radio telescopes site in New Mexico.

The new name was selected from among 23,331 suggestions submitted by 17,023 people from more than 65 countries. The National Radio Astronomy Observatory had asked the public and the astronomical community to suggest names that reflected both the proud heritage and the future promise of the telescope array. More is on-line at tinyurl.com/jansky-vla. (NARO)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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WORLDBEAT: THE HCJB COAX CABLE MIRACLE

Word that religious broadcaster HCJB has gotten its Radio Rasuwa project on the air as of last December the 1st, but not without a little divine guidance. An HCJB article about the rural Nepal radio project noted that engineer Ty Stakes fortuitously grabbed an extra length of coaxial cable as he packed for the journey to that lonely corner of the world. And it's a good thing that he did.

It turned out to be needed because the station's studio was not where it had been planned. Once on-site, Stakes and HCJB missionary Toffer King discovered the tower was not the one they had requested. Using local talent, translations and drawings solutions were crafted. A local welder found himself quite busy and needless to say that the

extra length of coax that Stakes brought with him came to good use.

HCJB's Global Technical Center in Elkhart, Indiana provided the FM transmitter. The station's coverage area is the northern border of Nepal with an estimated 14,000 people as its potential audience. This includes a large number of Tibetan refugees fleeing Chinese control of their country.

The station will air 17 hours a day, in the local language. It joins five other HCJB FMs in Nepal. Three more are expected to launch during 2012. (RW, HCJB)

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WORLDBEAT: RAC LOOKING FOR NEW DEFENSE OF AMATEUR RADIO FUND TRUSTEE

Radio Amateurs of Canada is looking for a person to fill the recently vacated position of trustee in the Canadian Defense of Amateur Radio Fund. The Defense of Amateur Radio Fund trustee must be a licensed Canadian radio amateur and may not be an officer, employee, director or agent of Radio Amateurs of Canada. The Defense of Amateur Radio Fund is a Trust Fund established in the early 1990's to provide financial support for travel expenses of an amateur radio representative on the Canadian delegation to World Radio Conferences to defend the amateur radio bands. If you fit the requirements and are interested in this position please provide your name and a brief resume of no more than 500 words by e-mail to Paul Burggraaf at Vo1prb73064 (at) rac (dot) ca. (RAC)

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WORLDBEAT: IRTS TO CELEBRATE 80TH ANNIVERSARY WITH CONTEST

The Irish Radio Transmitting Society which is Irelands national ham radio organization will be celebrating its 80th anniversary by sponsoring a worldwide contest to commemorate the event. Called CQIR, it will take place most appropriately on Saint Patrick's Day, which this year occurs on Saturday, March 17th. Full rules and information are available on-line at www.irts.ie/cqir or by email to cqir (at) irts (dot) ie. (IRTS)

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WORLDBEAT: EMI SOUNDS PAGE FROM ON4WW

ON4WW in Westham, Belgium, has created a web page with sound clips that covers the many cases of interference he's dealt with over the years. The sounds cover everything from a rain gutter noise to plasma TV interference and even L-E-D lighting. The ON4WW RFI audio page page is on-line at www.on4ww.be/emi-rfi.html (Southgate)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: DUTCH ANNOUNCE FUNCUBE LAUNCH AGREEMENT

An agreement has now been reached with ISIS Launch Services BV, based

in Delft in the Netherlands, for them to provide a launch of the FUNcube-1 CubeSat satellite. It is anticipated that this will be with a number of other spacecraft from a DNEPR rocket, sometime in the third quarter of 2012.

The orbit is still to be defined precisely but it is expected to be nearly circular and approximately sun synchronous. The FUNcube-1 spacecraft will transmit signals that can be easily received directly by schools and colleges for educational outreach purposes. In addition to providing these educational services for schools and colleges around the world, the spacecraft will also carry a UHF to VHF linear transponder for radio amateurs to use during local nights, weekends and during holiday periods.

The construction and testing of the spacecraft itself has already been funded via a legacy and other sources. For more information, check out www.funcube.org.uk (GB2RS)

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SPACE SCIENCE: CHINA RELEASES FIVE YEAR PLAN FOR SPACE EXPLORATION

China plans to launch orbital space laboratories and manned ships and prepare to build space stations over the next five years. This according to a plan released Thursday, December 29th that shows the country's space program is very quickly gathering momentum.

China has already said its eventual goals are to have a space station on-orbit and put an astronaut on the moon. According to news reports, that nation has made systematic progress with its ambitious human spaceflight programs, but its latest five-year plan beginning signals a major acceleration to its space exploration program.

According to the white paper setting out China's space progress and future missions, by the end of 2016 China says that it will launch space laboratories, manned spaceships and ship freighters. It will also make technological preparations for the construction of more than one space station.

China's space program has already made major breakthroughs in a relatively short time, although it lags far behind the United States and Russia in space technology and experience. More on China's plans for its future in space is on-line at tinyurl.com/d52q2lj (Space Science)

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ON THE AIR W4NH FOURLANDERS SEEK WSJT CONTACTS IN VHF SWEEPS

The W4NH Fourlanders group will again be operating in the January VHF Sweepstakes from January 21st to the 23rd from its location near Dahlonega, Georgia. That is in grid square EM-84-ao.

According to Jim Worsham, W4KXY, the group will operate limited multi category on 6meters through 432 MHz running a full gallon into stacked beams on all four bands.

W4KXY notes that the group is looking for skeds, especially 6 and 2 meters with those operating WSJT. If you are interested in such a scheduled contact please contact Jim Worsham by e-mail to wa4kxy (at) bellsouth (dot) net. (VHF Reflector)

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DX

In DX, G3PHO will be on the air as 9H3C from Malta's Gozo Island between March 8th and the 15th. Activity will be on 80-10 meters and possibly 160m. Look for him to be an entry in the RGSB Commonwealth Contest. QSL via his home callsign or Logbok of the World.

JS6RRR will be operational stroke KH2 from Guam between February 10th and the 14th. Activity will be on 160 through 6 meters using CW, SSB, FM, RTTY and PSK31. QSL via JS6RRR.

IK2GZU will be in Tanzania to do some work at a new hospital and orphanage between March 4th and April 4th. He plans to be active during his spare time as 5H3MB on the HF bands. QSL via IK2GZU, direct or by the Bureau. Also, via Logbook of the World, but only after his return home.

IK2QPR will be active stroke PJ7 from Sint Maarten through January 16th. This operation will be holiday style on the H-F bands. QSL via IK2QPR.

IW2CXJ will be active portable YS3 from El Salvador through January 24th. His operation will also be holiday style on 40-10 meters using a Cushcraft R7 vertical and 100 watts. QSL via LoTW, eQSL or direct to IW2CXJ.

Lastly, OE3GEA will take to the airwaves stroke 6Y5 from Jamaica between February 2nd and the 12th. This will be yet another holiday style operation, mainly using CW. QSL to his home address.

And for those not familiar with the term holiday style, it basically means that the ham in question is on vacation and will get on the air anytime that he or she feels like operating, if at all.

(Above from various DX news sources)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF COUNTRY MUSIC LEGEND JOHNNY CASH

And finally this week, ham radio will help commemorate the life of a country music legend. Tim Goodrich, N5ASH, better known to radio listeners as Skeeter Nash, joins us with the details:

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Members of my club, the Northeast Arkansas Radio Club will be sponsoring the first ever Johnny Cash Birthday Celebration Special Event Station. This, on what would have been the late Country Music Hall of Fame and Rock and Roll Hall of Fame members 80th birthday.

The Johnny Cash Birthday Celebration Special Event Station will take to the air on Sunday, February 26th using the special call sign N5C. You can listen out for it beginning at 18:00 hours UTC which is noon Central U-S time. We plan to operate for a six hour period ending around 6 p.m. Central US time. .

N5C will have stations operating SSB on the 80, 40 20 and 10 meter bands. At least one of these will be located in Dyess Colony, not far from the house where the Cash family once lived.

Johnny Cash never forgot his roots here in northeast Arkansas, and we in the amateur radio community are looking forward to having the opportunity to honor one of the most recognizable figures in music history. Those making contact with N5C will receive a commemorative certificate.

>From Jonesboro, Arkansas, Im Tim Goodrich, N5ASH, a-k-a Skeeter Nash of the Northeast Arkansas Radio Club reporting for the Amateur Radio Newsline.

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More information on this celebration can be found at the Northeast Arkansas Radio Club website. It's located in cyberspace at nea-rc.org. The club also maintains a Facebook page at eww.facebook.com/nearadioclub (N5ASH)

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB, the Southgate News and Australia's WIA News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline(at) arnewsline (dot) org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), 28197 Robin Avenue, Santa Clarita California, 91350

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Jeff Clark, K8JAC, saying 73 and we thank you for listening.

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